

DOINGWHATWORKS



Audio

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Principal's Role in Using Data to Guide Instruction

Warfield Elementary School, Florida • April 2007

Topic: Teaching Literacy in English to K-5 English Learners

Practice: Screen and Monitor Progress

Highlight

- Warfield Elementary's principal describes the importance of aligned standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment and the critical role of coaches in using data to guide instruction.

About the Site

Warfield Elementary School (K-4)
Indiantown, FL

Demographics

75% Hispanic, 5% White, 17% Black

96% Free or reduced-price lunch

67% Limited English Proficient

Warfield Elementary School uses an inclusive, English immersion approach for their English learners, the majority of whom are of Guatemalan descent and speak either Spanish or one of several Guatemalan Indian dialects, which lack a written language. Distinctive features of the school include:

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- A continuous improvement model for instruction; data disaggregation and analysis, facilitated by a reading coach and writing/math coach, drive all instruction
- Instructional calendars for all content areas and grade levels that show standards being taught, instructional activities, and assessments to monitor student progress
- A schoolwide reading program based on an external model, along with a core textbook series
- Data available to teachers on fast turnaround, either in profiles produced by the reading coach or through reports from district and state databases.
- Whole-group instruction based on the instructional calendars, combined with flexible small-group instruction based on students' needs
- Interventions provided within the classroom, including several that are technology-based
- Instructional strategies that are research-based; for example, a vocabulary program that is based on Isabel Beck's research
- All teachers with an ESOL endorsement on their teaching certificates
- Paraprofessionals who speak the children's native languages to ease the transition into school and support teachers in working with students

Full Transcript

Hi, I'm Loreen Francesceni, principal at Warfield Elementary School, which is in Indiantown, Florida.

We are a Title I school, 97% free and reduced lunch. We have 71% of our population which is designated as second language learners. One of the things that is most important about being part of a school that serves such a high-risk population is the need to be vigilant about the instructional content that the children are exposed to. It is critical that our students are receiving instruction for the state standards that are specified for their grade level, and I think our teachers work very, very hard to take those standards and make sure that the information is presented in a way so it is understandable to all of our students.

The other thing that is critical to knowing whether we are meeting that expectation is we have a very specific assessment program, which is critically aligned to the curriculum, which is, of course, aligned to the standards. So, we have this wonderful way of monitoring whether or not we are accomplishing our goals. The assessment information is evaluated by the classroom teachers, along with two coaches we have on campus, one for math and writing, and one for reading. They look very carefully at weaknesses that they see among particular students, which means small group instruction is needed. If it's a weakness that's apparent for the entire class, it's reinstruction of that entire class on that specific benchmark or standard. So, I think the attitude here is, "Everybody can do it, and it's our job to make sure it gets done."

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We really are data-driven, in every single content area, and we've used the data enough now that we know it's giving us good information, and that's critical. The data that you use has to be reliable. You have to know that it's giving you an accurate read on the benchmarks you are required to teach. We have confidence in ours. We use that information to plan instruction, and that runs our school.